

T H E
P A T R O N.

A
C O M E D Y,

In T H R E E A C T S.

As it is performed at the
T H E A T R E in the H A Y - M A R K E T.

By S A M U E L F O O T E, E s q ;

The T H I R D E D I T I O N.

L O N D O N,
Printed for P. V A I L L A N T, T. L O W N D E S, T. C A S L O N,
and W. N I C O L L. M.DCC.LXXIV.

[Price One Shilling and Six-pence.]



T O T H E
RIGHT HONOURABLE
Granville Leveson Gower,

Earl Gower, Lord Chamberlain of his
Majesty's Household.

MY LORD,

THE following little Comedy, founded on a story of M. Marmontelle's, and calculated to expose the frivolity and ignorance of the pretenders to learning, with the insolence and vanity of their superficial, illiberal protectors, can be addressed to no Nobleman with more propriety than to Lord Gower; whose judgment, though elegant, is void of affectation; and whose patronage, though powerful, is destitute of all fastidious parade. It is with pleasure, my Lord, that the public sees your Lordship placed at the head of that department which is to decide, without appeal,

on the most popular domain in the whole republic of letters; a spot that has always been distinguished with affection, and cultivated with care, by every ruler the least attentive to either chastising the morals, polishing the manners, or, what is of equal importance, rationally amusing the leisure of the people.

The Patron, my Lord, who now begs your protection, has had the good fortune to be well received by the public; and indeed, of all the pieces that I have had the honour to offer them, this seems to me to have the fairest claim to their favour.

But the play, stripped of those theatrical ornaments for which it is indebted to your Lordship's indulgence, must now plead its own cause; nor will I, my Lord, with an affected humility, echo the trite, coarse, though classical compliment, of *Optimus patronus pessimus poeta*: For if this be really true of the last, the first can have but small pretensions to praise; patronizing bad poets being, in my poor opinion, full as pernicious to the progress of letters, as neglecting the good.

In

DEDICATION.

v

In humble hopes, then, my Lord, of not being thought the meanest in the muses train, I have taken the liberty to prefix your name to this Dedication, and publickly to acknowledge my obligations to your Lordship; which, let me boast too, I have had the happiness to receive, untainted by the insolence of domestics, the delays of office, or the chilling superiority of rank; mortifications which have been too often experienced by much greater writers than myself, from much less men than your Lordship.

My Lord, I have the honour to be, with the greatest respect and gratitude,

Your Lordship's most oblig'd,

and most devoted,

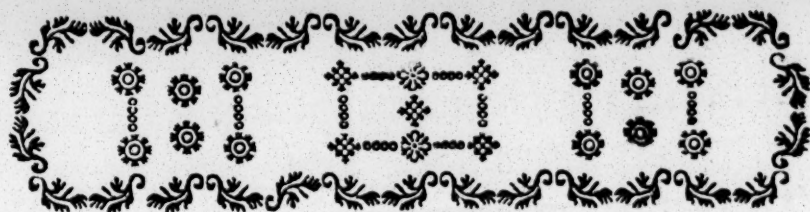
humble servant,

West-End,
June 20, 1764.

SAMUEL FOOTE.

Dramatis Personæ.

Sir THOMAS LOFTY,	} Mr. FOOTE.
Sir PETER PEPPERPOT,	
DICK BEVER,	Mr. DEATH.
FRANK YOUNGER,	Mr. DAVIS.
Sir ROGER DOWLAS,	Mr. PALMER.
Mr. RUST,	Mr. WESTON.
Mr. DACTYL,	Mr. GRANGER.
Mr. PUFF,	Mr. HAYES.
Mr. STAYTAPE,	Mr. BROWN.
ROBIN,	Mr. PARSONS.
JOHN,	Mr. LEWIS.
Two Blacks.	
Miss JULIET,	Mrs. GRANGER.



THE
PATRON.

ACT I.

Scene the Street.

Enter BEVER and YOUNGER.

YOUNGER.



O, Dick, you must pardon me.

BEVER.

Nay, but to satisfy your curiosity.

YOUNGER.

I tell you, I have not a jot.

BEVER.

Why then to gratify me.

A 4

YOUNGER.

THE PATRON.

YOUNGER.

At rather too great an expence.

BEVER.

To a fellow of your observation and turn,
I should think, now, such a scene a most
delicate treat.

YOUNGER.

Delicate ! Palling, nauseous, to a dreadful degree. To a lover, indeed, the charms of the niece may palliate the uncle's fulsome formality.

BEVER.

The uncle ! aye, but then you know he is only one of the group.

YOUNGER.

That's true ; but the figures are all finish'd alike. A maniere, a tiresome sameness throughout.

BEVER.

There you will excuse me ; I am sure there is no want of variety.

YOUNGER.

No ! then let us have a detail. Come, Dick, give us a bill of the play.

BEVER.

First, you know, there's Juliet's uncle.

YOUNGER.

What, Sir Thomas Lofty ! the modern Midas, or rather (as fifty dedications will tell

THE PATRON. 3

tell you) the Pollio, the Atticus, the patron of genius, the protector of arts, the paragon of poets, decider on merit, chief justice of taste, and sworn appraiser to Apollo and the tuneful nine. Ha, ha! Oh, the tedious, insipid, insufferable coxcomb!

BEVER.

Nay, now, Frank, you are too extravagant. He is universally allow'd to have taste; sharp-judging Adriel, the muse's friend, himself a muse.

YOUNGER.

Taste! by who? underling bards, that he feeds; and broken booksellers, that he bribes. Look ye, Dick, what raptures you please when Miss Lofty is your theme, but expect no quarter for the rest of the family. I tell thee once for all, Lofty is a rank impostor, the bufo of an illiberal mercenary tribe; he has neither genius to create, judgment to distinguish, nor generosity to reward; his wealth has gain'd him flattery from the indigent, and the haughty insolence of his pretence, admiration from the ignorant. *Voilà le portrait de votre oncle.* Now on to the next.

BEVER.

The ingenious and erudite Mr. Rust.

YOUNGER.

YOUNGER.

What, old Martin, the medal-monger?

BEVER.

The same, and my rival in Juliet.

YOUNGER.

Rival! what, Rust? why, she's too modern for him by a couple of centuries. Martin! why he likes no heads but upon coins. Marry'd! the mummy! Why 'tis not above a fortnight ago, that I saw him making love to the figure without a nose, in Somerset-Gardens: I caught him stroaking the marble plaits of her gown, and asked him if he was not ashamed to take such liberties with Ladies in public?

BEVER.

What an inconstant old scoundrel it is.

YOUNGER.

Oh, a Dorimant. But how came this about? what could occasion the change? was it in the power of flesh and blood to seduce this adorer of virtù from his marble and porphyry?

BEVER.

Juliet has done it; and, what will surprise you, his taste was a bawd to the business.

YOUNGER.

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YOUNGER.

Prythee explain.

BEVER.

Juliet met him last week at her uncle's: he was a little pleased with the Greek of her profile; but, on a closer enquiry, he found the turn-up of her nose too exactly resemble the bust of the Princess Popæa.

YOUNGER.

The chaste moiety of the amiable Nero.

BEVER.

The same.

YOUNGER.

Oh, the deuce! then your business was done in an instant.

BEVER.

Immediately. In favour of the tip, he offered *chart blanche* for the rest of the figure, which, (as you may suppose,) was instantly caught at.

YOUNGER.

Doubtless. But who have we here?

BEVER.

This is one of Lofty's companions, a West-Indian of an over-grown fortune. He saves me the trouble of a portrait. This is Sir Peter Pepperpot.

Enter

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Enter Sir PETER PEPPERPOT, and two Blacks.

Sir PETER.

Careless scoundrels! harkee, rascals! I'll banish you home, you dogs! you shall back, and broil in the sun. Mr. Bever, your humble; Sir, I am your entirely devoted.

BEVER.

You seem mov'd; what has been the matter, Sir Peter?

Sir PETER.

Matter! why I am invited to dinner on a barbicu, and the villains have forgot my bottle of chian.

YOUNGER.

Unpardonable.

Sir PETER.

Aye, this country has spoil'd them; this same christening will ruin the colonies. --- Well, dear Bever, rare news, boy; our fleet is arriv'd from the West.

BEVER.

It is?

Sir PETER.

Aye, lad, and a glorious cargo of turtle. It was lucky I went to Brighthelmstone; I nick'd the time to a hair; thin as a lath,
and

THE PATRON. 7

and a stomach as sharp as a shark's : Never was in finer condition for feeding.

BEVER.

Have you a large importation, Sir Peter?

Sir PETER.

Nine ; but seven in excellent order : The Captain assures me they greatly gain'd ground on the voyage.

BEVER.

How do you dispose of them ?

Sir PETER.

Four to Cornhill, three to Almack's, and the two sickly ones I shall send to my borough in Yorkshire.

YOUNGER.

Aye, what, have the Provincials a relish for turtle ?

Sir PETER.

Sir, it is amazing how this country improves in turtle and turnpikes ; to which (give me leave to say,) we, from our part of the world, have not a little contributed. Why formerly, Sir, a brace of bucks, on the Mayor's annual day, was thought a pretty moderate blessing. But we, Sir, have polish'd their palates : Why, Sir, not the meanest member of my Corporation but can distinguish the pash from the pee.

YOUNGER.

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YOUNGER.

Indeed!

Sir PETER.

Aye, and fever the green from the shell,
with the skill of the ablest anatomist.

YOUNGER.

And are they fond of it?

Sir PETER.

Oh, that the consumption will tell
you. The stated allowance is six pounds
to an Alderman, and five to each of their
wives.

BEVER.

A plentiful provision.

Sir PETER.

But there was never known any waste:
The Mayor, Recorder, and Rector, are per-
mitted to eat as much as they please.

YOUNGER.

The entertainment is pretty expensive.

Sir PETER.

Land-carriage, and all. But I contriv'd
to smuggle the last that I sent them.

BEVER.

Smuggle! I don't understand you.

Sir PETER.

Why, Sir, the rascally Coachman had
always charged me five pounds for the car-
riage. Damn'd dear! Now my Cook go-
ing

ing at the same time into the country, I made him clap a capuchin upon the turtle, and for thirty shillings put him an inside passenger in the Doncaster Fly.

Y O U N G E R.

A happy expedient.

B E V E R.

Oh, Sir Peter has infinite humour.

Sir P E T E R.

Yes, but the frolick had like to have prov'd fatal.

Y O U N G E R.

How so?

Sir P E T E R.

The maid at the Rummer, at Hatfield, popp'd her head into the coach, to know if the company would have any breakfast: Ecod, the turtle, Sir, laid hold of her nose, and flapp'd her face with his fins, till the poor devil fell into a fit. Ha, ha, ha!

Y O U N G E R.

Oh, an absolute Rabelais.

B E V E R.

What, I reckon, Sir Peter, you are going to the Square?

Sir P E T E R.

Yes; I extremely admire Sir Thomas: You know this is his day of assembly; I
suppose

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suppose you will be there : I can tell you,
you are a wonderful favourite.

B E V E R .

Am I ?

Sir P E T E R .

He says, your natural genius is fine ; and
when polish'd by his cultivation, will surprize
and astonish the world.

B E V E R .

I hope, Sir, I shall have your voice with
the public.

Sir P E T E R .

Mine ! O fye, Mr. Bever.

B E V E R .

Come, come, you are no inconsiderable
Patron.

Sir P E T E R .

He, he, he ! Can't say but I love to en-
courage the Arts.

B E V E R .

And have contributed largely yourself.

Y O U N G E R .

What, is Sir Peter an Author ?

Sir P E T E R .

O fye ! what me ? a mere dabbler ;
have blotted my fingers, 'tis true. Some
sonnets, that have not been thought wanting
in salt.

B E V E R .

And your epigrams.

Sir

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Sir P E T E R.

Not entirely without point.

B E V E R.

But come, Sir Peter, the love of the arts is not the sole cause of your visits to the house you are going to.

Sir P E T E R.

I don't understand you.

B E V E R.

Miss Juliet, the niece.

Sir P E T E R.

O fye! what chance have I there? Indeed if Lady Pepperpot should happen to pop off —

B E V E R.

I don't know that. You are, Sir Peter, a dangerous man; and were I a father, or uncle, I should not be a little shy of your visits.

Sir P E T E R.

Psha! dear Bever, you banter.

B E V E R.

And (unless I am extremely out in my guess,) that Lady —

Sir P E T E R.

Hey! what, what, dear Bever?

B E V E R.

But if you should betray me —

B

Sir

Sir PETER.

May I never eat a bit of green fat, if I do.

BEVER.

Hints have been dropp'd.

Sir PETER.

The devil! come a little this way.

BEVER.

Well made; not robust and gigantic, 'tis true, but extremely genteel.

Sir PETER.

Indeed!

BEVER.

Features, not entirely regular; but marking, with an air now, superior; greatly above the — you understand me?

Sir PETER.

Perfectly. Something noble; expressive of --- fashion.

BEVER.

Right.

Sir PETER.

Yes, I have been frequently told so.

BEVER.

Not an absolute wit; but something infinitely better: An *enjouement*, a spirit, a ---

Sir PETER.

Gaiety. I was ever so from a child.

BEVER.

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B E V E R.

In short, your dress, address, with a thousand other particulars that at present I can't recollect.

Sir P E T E R.

Why, dear Bever, to tell thee the truth, I have always admir'd Miss Juliet, and a delicate creature she is: Sweet as a sugar-cane, strait as a bamboo, and her teeth as white as a negro's.

B E V E R.

Poetic, but true. Now only conceive, Sir Peter, such a plantation of perfections to be devoured by that caterpillar, Rust.

Sir P E T E R.

A liquorish grub! Are pine-apples for such muckworms as he? I'll send him a jar of citrons and ginger, and poison the pipkin.

B E V E R.

No, no.

Sir P E T E R.

Or invite him to dinner, and mix rat's-bane along with his curry.

B E V E R.

Not so precipitate; I think we may defeat him without any danger.

Sir P E T E R.

How, how?

B 2

B E V E R.

BEVER.

I have a thought---but we must settle the plan with the Lady. Could not you give her the hint, that I should be glad to see her a moment.

Sir PETER.

I'll do it directly.

BEVER.

But don't let Sir Thomas perceive you.

Sir PETER.

Never fear. You'll follow.

BEVER.

The instant I have settled matters with her; but fix the old fellow so that she may not be miss'd.

Sir PETER.

I'll nail him, I warrant; I have his opinion to beg on this manuscript.

BEVER.

Your own?

Sir PETER.

No.

BEVER.

Oh ho! what something new from the Doctor, your Chaplain?

Sir PETER.

He! no, no. O Lord, he's elop'd.

BEVER.

How!

Sir

Sir PETER.

Gone. You know he was to dedicate his volume of fables to me : So I gave him thirty pounds to get my arms engrav'd, to prefix (by way of print) to the frontispiece ; and, O grief of griefs ! the Doctor has mov'd off with the money. I'll send you Miss Juliet. *[Exit.*

BEVER.

There, now, is a special protector ; the arts, I think, can't but flourish under such a Mecænas.

YOUNGER.

Heaven visits with a taste the wealthy fool.

BEVER.

True ; but then to justify the dispensation,

From hence the poor are cloath'd, the hungry fed,
Fortunes to Booksellers, to Authors bread.

YOUNGER.

The distribution is, I own, a little unequal : And here comes a most melancholy instance ; poor Dick Dactyl, and his Publisher, Puff.

Enter DACTYL and PUFF.

PUFF.

Why, then, Mr. Daçtyl, carry them to somebody else; there are people enough in the trade; but I wonder you would meddle with poetry; you know it rarely pays for the paper.

DACTYL.

And how can one help it, Mr. Puff? Genius impels; and when a man is once listed in the service of the Muses ---

PUFF.

Why, let him give them warning as soon as he can. A pretty sort of service, indeed! where there are neither wages, nor vails. The Muses! And what, I suppose this is the livery they give. Gadzooks, I had rather be a Waiter at Ranelagh.

BEVER.

The Poet and Publisher at variance! What is the matter, Mr. Daçtyl?

DACTYL.

As Gad shall judge me, Mr. Bever, as pretty a poem, and so polite; not a mortal can take any offence; all full of panegyric and praise.

PUFF.

P U F F.

A fine character he gives of his works. No offence ! the greatest in the world, Mr. Daetyl. Panegyric and praise ! and what will that do with the publick ? why who the devil will give money to be told, that Mr. Such-a-one is a wiser or better man than himself ? No, no ; 'tis quite and clean out of nature. A good fousing satire now, well powdered with personal pepper, and seasoned with the spirit of party ; that demolishes a conspicuous character, and sinks him below our own level ; there, there, we are pleased ; there we chuckle, and grin, and tofs the half-crowns on the counter.

D A C T Y L.

Yes, and so get cropp'd for a libel.

P U F F.

Cropp'd ! aye, and the luckiest thing that can happen to you. Why, I would not give two-pence for an Author that is afraid of his ears. Writing, writing is, (as I may say,) Mr. Daetyl, a sort of a warfare, where none can be victor that is the least afraid of a scar. Why, zooks, Sir, I never got salt to my porridge till I mounted at the Royal Exchange.

B 4

B E V E R.

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BEVER.

Indeed !

PUFF.

No, no ; that was the making of me. Then my name made a noise in the world. Talk of forked hills, and of Helicon ! romantic, and fabulous stuff. The true Castalian stream is a shower of eggs, and a pilory the Poet's Parnassus.

DACTYL.

Aye, to you, indeed, it may answer ; but what do we get for our pains ?

PUFF.

Why, what the deuce would you get ? food, fire, and fame. Why, you would not grow fat ! a corpulent Poet is a monster, a prodigy ! No, no ; spare diet is a spur to the fancy ; high feeding would but founder your Pegasus.

DACTYL.

Why, you impudent, illiterate rascal ! who is it you dare treat in this manner ?

PUFF.

Heyday ! what is the matter now ?

DACTYL.

And is this the return for all the obligations you owe me ? But no matter ; the world,

THE PATRON. 19

world, the world shall know what you are,
and how you have us'd me.

P U F F.

Do your worst; I despise you.

D A C T Y L.

They shall be told from what a dunghill
you sprang. Gentlemen, if there be faith
in a finner, that fellow owes every shilling to
me.

P U F F.

To thee!

D A C T Y L.

Ay, Sirrah, to me. In what kind of
way did I find you? then where and what
was your state? Gentlemen, his shop was
a shed in Moorfields; his kitchen, a broken
pipkin of charcoal; and his bed-chamber,
under the counter.

P U F F.

I never was fond of expence; I ever minded
my trade.

D A C T Y L.

Your trade! and pray with what stock
did you trade? I can give you the cata-
logue; I believe it won't overburthen my
memory. Two odd volumes of Swift; the
Life of Moll Flanders, with cuts; the Five
Senses, printed and coloured by Overton;
a few

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a few classics, thumb'd and blotted by the boys of the Charter-house; with the trial of Dr. Sacheverel.

P U F F .

Malice.

D A C T Y L .

Then, Sirrah, I gave you my Canning :
it was she first set you afloat.

P U F F .

A grub.

D A C T Y L .

And it is not only my writings : You
know, Sirrah, what you owe to my phy-
sick.

B E V E R .

How ! a physician ?

D A C T Y L .

Yes, Mr. Bever ; physick and poetry.
Apollo is the patron of both : *Opiferque per
orbem dicor.*

P U F F .

His physick !

D A C T Y L .

My physick ! ay, my physick : Why, dare
you deny it, you rascal ! What, have you
forgot my powders for flatulent crudities ?

P U F F .

No.

D A C -

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DACTYL.

My cosmetic lozenge, and sugar plumbs?

PUFF.

No.

DACTYL.

My coral for cutting of teeth, my potions,
my lotions, my pregnancy-drops, with my
paste for superfluous hairs?

PUFF.

No, no; have you done?

DACTYL.

No, no, no; but I believe this will suffice
for the present.

PUFF.

Now would not any mortal believe that
I ow'd my all to this fellow?

BEVER.

Why, indeed, Mr. Puff, the balance does
seem in his favour.

PUFF.

In his favour! why you don't give any
credit to him: A reptile, a bug, that owes
his very being to me.

DACTYL.

I, I, I!

PUFF.

You, you! What, I suppose you forget
your garret in Wine-office-court, when you
furnish'd

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furnish'd paragraphs for the Farthing-post at twelve-pence a dozen.

D A C T Y L .

Fiction.

P U F F .

Then did not I get you made collector of casualties to the Whitehall and St. James's? but that post your laziness lost you. Gentlemen, he never brought them a robbery till the highwayman was going to be hang'd; a birth till the christening was over; nor a death till the hatchment was up.

D A C T Y L .

Mighty well!

P U F F .

And now, because the fellow has got a little in flesh, by being puff to the play-house this winter, (to which, by the bye, I got him appointed) he is as proud and as vain as Voltaire. But I shall soon have him under; the vacation will come.

D A C T Y L .

Let it.

P U F F .

Then I shall have him sneaking and cringing, hanging about me, and begging a bit of translation.

D A C -

THE PATRON. 23

DACTYL.

I beg, I, for translation!

PUFF.

No, no, not a line; not if you would do it for two-pence a sheet. No boil'd beef and carrot at mornings; no more cold pudding and porter. You may take your leave of my shop.

DACTYL.

Your shop! then at parting I will leave you a legacy.

BEVER.

O fye, Mr. Dactyl!

PUFF.

Let him alone.

DACTYL.

Pray, Gentlemen, let me do myself justice.

BEVER.

Younger, restrain the Publisher's fire.

YOUNGER.

Fie, Gentlemen, such an illiberal combat: it is a scandal to the republic of letters.

BEVER.

Mr. Dactyl, an old man, a mechanic, beneath —

D A C -

D A C T Y L.

Sir, I am calm; that thought has restor'd
me. To your insignificancy you are in-
debted for safety. But what my generosity
has saved, my pen shall destroy.

P U F F.

Then you must get somebody to mend it.

D A C T Y L.

Adieu!

P U F F.

Farewell!

[Exeunt severally.]

B E V E R.

Ha, ha, ha! come, let us along to the
Square.

Blockheads with reason wicked wits abhor,
But dunce with dunce is barb'rous civil war.

END of the FIRST ACT.

ACT



A C T II. *Scene continues.*

Enter BEVER and YOUNGER.

YOUNGER.

POOR Dactyl! and dwells such mighty
rage in little men? I hope there is no
danger of bloodshed.

BEVER.

Oh, not in the least: The *gens vatum*,
the nation of poets, though an irritable,
are yet a placable people. Their mutual
interests will soon bring them together
again.

YOUNGER.

But shall not we be late? The critical
senate is by this time assembled.

BEVER.

I warrant you, frequent and full; where
Stately Bufo, puff'd by ev'ry quill,
Sits like Apollo, on his forked hill.

But

26 THE PATRON.

But you know I must wait for Miss Lofty; I am now totally directed by her; she gives me the key to all Sir Thomas's foibles, and prescribes the most proper method to feed them; but what good purpose that will produce—

YOUNGER.

Is she clever, adroit?

BEVER.

Doubtless. I like your asking the question of me.

YOUNGER.

Then pay an implicit obedience: The Ladies, in these cases, generally know what they are about. The door opens.

BEVER.

It is Juliet, and with her old Rust. Enter, Frank: You know the Knight, so no introduction is wanted. [*Exit Younger.*] I should be glad to hear this reverend piece of lumber make love; the courtship must certainly be curious. Good manners stand by; by your leave I will listen a little. [*Bever retires.*]

Enter JULIET and RUST.

JULIET.

And your collection is large?

RUST.

R U S T.

Most curious and capital. When, Madam, will you give me leave to add your charms to my catalogue?

J U L I E T.

O dear! Mr. Rust, I shall but disgrace it. Besides, Sir, when I marry, I am resolved to have my husband all to myself: Now for the possession of your heart I shall have too many competitors.

R U S T.

How, Madam! were Prometheus alive, and would animate the Helen that stands in my hall, she should not cost me a sigh.

J U L I E T.

Aye, Sir, there lies my greatest misfortune. Had I only those who are alive to contend with, by assiduity, affection, cares, and caresses, I might secure my conquest; though that would be difficult; for I am convinc'd, were you, Mr. Rust, put up by Prestige to auction, the Apollo Belvidere would not draw a greater number of bidders.

R U S T.

Would that were the case, Madam, so I might be thought a proper companion to the Venus de Medicis.

C

J U -

JULIET.

The flower of rhetoric, and pink of politeness. But my fears are not confined to the living; for every nation and age, even painters and statuaries, conspire against me. Nay, when the pantheon itself, the very goddesses rise up as my rivals, what chance has a mortal like me?——I shall certainly laugh in his face. [*Aside.*]

RUST.

She is a delicate subject.——Goddesses, Madam! zooks, had you been on Mount Ida when Paris decided the contest, the Cyprian queen had pleaded for the pippin in vain.

JULIET.

Extravagant gallantry.

RUST.

In you, Madam, are concenter'd all the beauties of the Heathen mythology: The open front of Diana, the lustre of Pallas's eyes —

JULIET.

Oh, Sir!

RUST.

The chromatic musick of Clio, the blooming graces of Hebe, the empereal port of queen Juno, with the delicate dimples of Venus.

JU-

JULIET.

I see, Sir, antiquity has not engross'd all your attention: You are no novice in the nature of woman. Incense, I own, is grateful to most of my sex; but there are times when adoration may be dispens'd with.

RUST.

Ma'am!

JULIET.

I say, Sir, when we women willingly wave our rank in the skies, and wish to be treated as mortals.

RUST.

Doubtless, Madam: And are you wanting in materials for that? No, Madam; as in dignity you surpass the Heathen divinities, so in the charms of attraction you beggar the queens of the earth. The whole world, at different periods, has contributed its several beauties to form you.

JULIET.

The deuce it has! [*Aside.*]

RUST.

See there the ripe Asiatic perfection, join'd to the delicate softness of Europe. In you, Madam, I burn to possess Cleopatra's alluring glances, the Greek profile of queen Clytemnestra, the Roman nose of the empress Popæa.

JULIET.

With the majestic march of queen Bess. Mercy on me, what a wonderful creature am I!

RUST.

In short, Madam, not a feature you have, but recalls to my mind some trait in a medal or bust.

JULIET.

Indeed! Why, by your account, I must be an absolute olio, a perfect salamongundy of charms.

RUST.

Oh, Madam, how can you demean, as I may say, undervalue—

JULIET.

Value! there is the thing; and to tell you the truth, Mr. Rust, in that word value lies my greatest objection.

RUST.

I don't understand you.

JULIET.

Why then I will explain myself. It has been said, and I believe with some shadow of truth, that no man is a hero to his valet de chambre; now I am afraid when you and I grow a little more intimate, which I suppose must be the case if you proceed on your plan, you will be horribly dis-

disappointed in your high expectations, and soon discover this Juno, this Cleopatra, and princess Popæa, to be as arrant a mortal as madam your mother.

RUST.

Madam, I, I, I—

JULIET.

Your patience a moment. Being therefore desirous to preserve your devotion, I beg, for the future, you would please to adore at a distance.

RUST.

To Endymion, Madam, Luna once listened.

JULIET.

Aye, but he was another kind of a mortal; you may do very well as a votary; but for a husband --- mercy upon me!

RUST.

Madam, you are not in earnest, not serious!

JULIET.

Not serious! Why have you the impudence to think of marrying a goddess?

RUST.

I should hope—

JULIET.

And what should you hope? I find your devotion resembles that of the world:

When the power of finning is over, and the sprightly first-runnings of life are rack'd off, you offer the vapid dregs to your deity. No, no; you may, if you please, turn monk in my service. One vow, I believe, you will observe better than most of them, Chastity.

R U S T.

Permit me—

J U L I E T.

Or, if you must marry, take your Julia, your Portia, or Flora, your Fum-fam from China, or your Egyptian Ofiris. You have long paid your addresses to them.

R U S T.

Marry! what, marble?

J U L I E T.

The properest wives in the world; you can't choose amiss; they will supply you with all that you want.

R U S T.

Your uncle has, Madam, consented.

J U L I E T.

That is more than ever his niece will. Consented! and to what? To be swath'd to a mould'ring mummy; or be lock'd up, like your medals, to canker and rust in a cabinet! No, no; I was made for the world, and the world shall not be robb'd of its right.

B E V E R,

BEVER.

Bravo, Juliet! Gad, she's a fine-spirited girl.

JULIET.

My profile, indeed! No, Sir, when I marry, I must have a man that will meet my full face.

RUST.

Might I be heard for a moment?

JULIET.

To what end? You say, you have Sir Thomas Loft's consent; I tell you, you can never have mine. You may screen me from, or expose me to, my uncle's resentment; the choice is your own: If you lay the fault at my door, you will, doubtless, greatly distress me; but take the blame on yourself, and I shall own myself extremely oblig'd to you.

RUST.

How! confess myself in the fault?

JULIET.

Aye; for the best thing a man can do, when he finds he can't be lov'd, is to take care he is not heartily hated. There is no other alternative.

RUST.

Madam, I sha'n't break my word with Sir Thomas.

JULIET.

Nor I with myself. So there's an end of our conference. Sir, your very obedient.

RUST.

Madam, I, I, don't—that is, let me—
But no matter. Your servant. [*Exit.*]

JULIET.

Ha, ha, ha!

Enter BEVER from behind.

BEVER.

Ha, ha, ha! Incomparable Juliet! How the old dotard trembled and totter'd; he could not have been more inflam'd, had he been robb'd of his Otho.

JULIET.

Aye; was ever goddess so familiarly us'd? In my conscience, I began to be afraid that he would treat me as the Indians do their dirty divinities; whenever they are deaf to their prayers they beat and abuse them.

BEVER.

But, after all, we are in an awkward situation.

JULIET.

How so?

BEVER.

I have my fears.

J U-

JULIET.

So have not I.

BEVER.

Your uncle has resolv'd that you should be marry'd to Rust.

JULIET.

Aye, he may decree; but it is I that must execute.

BEVER.

But suppose he has given his word.

JULIET.

Why then let him recal it again.

BEVER.

But are you sure you shall have courage enough —

JULIET.

To say No? That requires much resolution, indeed.

BEVER.

Then I am at the heighth of my hopes.

JULIET.

Your hopes! Your hopes and your fears are ill-founded alike.

BEVER.

Why you are determined not to be his.

JULIET.

Well, and what then?

BEVER.

What then! why then you will be mine.

J U-

JULIET.

Indeed! and is that the natural consequence; whoever won't be his, must be yours. Is that the logic of Oxford?

BEVER.

Madam, I did flatter myself—

JULIET.

Then you did very wrong, indeed, Mr. Bever: You should ever guard against flattering yourself; for of all dangerous parasites, self is the worst.

BEVER.

I am astonish'd!

JULIET.

Astonish'd! you are mad, I believe! Why, I have not known you a month: It is true, my uncle says your father is his friend; your fortune, in time, will be easy; your figure is not remarkably faulty; and as to your understanding, passable enough for a young fellow who has not seen much of the world; but when one talks of a husband—Lord it's quite another sort of a—Ha, ha, ha! Poor Bever, how he stares! he stands like a statue!

BEVER.

Statue! Indeed, Madam, I am very near petrified.

J U-

JULIET.

Even then you will make as good a husband as Rust. But go, run, and join the assembly within: Be attentive to every word, motion, and look of my uncle's; be dumb when he speaks, admire all he says, laugh when he smirks, bow when he sneezes; in short, fawn, flatter, and cringe; don't be afraid of over-loading his stomach, for the Knight has a noble digestion, and you will find some there who will keep you in countenance.

BEVER.

I fly. So then, Juliet, your intention was only to try —

JULIET.

Don't plague me with impertinent questions; march; obey my directions. We must leave the issue to Chance; a greater friend to mankind than they are willing to own. Oh, if any thing new should occur, you may come into the drawing-room for further instructions.

[Exeunt severally.]

SCENE

38 THE PATRON.

SCENE a Room in Sir THOMAS LOFTY'S House.

Sir THOMAS, RUST, PUFF, DACTYL,
and others, discovered sitting.

Sir THOMAS.

Nothing new to-day from Parnassus?

DACTYL.

Not that I hear.

Sir THOMAS.

Nothing critical, philosophical, or political?

PUFF.

Nothing.

Sir THOMAS.

Then in this difette, this dearth of invention, give me leave, Gentlemen, to distribute my stores. I have here in my hand a little smart, satyrical epigram; new, and prettily pointed: In short, a production that Martial himself would not have blush'd to acknowledge.

RUST.

Your own, Sir Thomas?

Sir THOMAS.

O fie! no; sent me this morning, anonymous.

DACTYL.

Pray, Sir Thomas, let us have it.

ALL.

ALL.

By all means ; by all means.

Sir THOMAS.

To PHILLIS.

Think'st thou, fond Phillis, Strephon told thee true,
 Angels are painted fair, to look like you :
 Another story all the town will tell ;
 Phillis paints fair — to look like an an-gel.

ALL.

Fine ! fine ! very fine !

DACTYL.

Such an ease and simplicity !

PUFF.

The turn so unexpected and quick.

RUST.

The fatyr so poignant.

Sir THOMAS.

Yes ; I think it possesses, in an eminent
 degree, the three great epigrammatical re-
 quisites ; brevity, familiarity, and severity.

Phillis paints fair — to look like an an-gel.

DACTYL.

Happy ! Is the Phillis, the subject, a
 secret ?

Sir THOMAS.

Oh, dear me ! nothing personal ; no ; an
 impromptu ; a mere *jeu d'esprit*.

PUFF.

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PUFF.

Then, Sir Thomas, the secret is out ; it is your own.

DACTYL.

That was obvious enough.

PUFF.

Who is there else could have wrote it ?

RUST.

True, true.

Sir THOMAS.

The name of the Author is needless. So it is an acquisition to the republic of letters, any Gentleman may claim the merit that will.

PUFF.

What a noble contempt !

DACTYL.

What greatness of mind !

RUST.

Scipio and Lælius were the Roman Loftys. Why, I dare believe Sir Thomas has been the making of half the Authors in town : He is, as I may say, the great manufacturer ; the other Poets are but Pedlars, that live by retailing his wares.

ALL.

Ha, ha, ha ! well observ'd, Mr. Rust.

Sir THOMAS.

Ha, ha, ha ! *Molle atque facetum*. Why, to pursue the metaphor, if Sir Thomas Lofty was

THE PATRON. 41

was to call in his poetical debts, I believe there would be a good many bankrupts in the Muse's Gazette.

A L L.

Ha, ha, ha !

Sir T H O M A S.

But, *a-propos*, Gentlemen ; with regard to the eclipse : You found my calculation exact ?

D A C T Y L.

To a digit.

Sir T H O M A S.

Total darkness, indeed ! and birds going to roost ! Those Philomaths, those Almanack-makers, are the most ignorant rascals —

P U F F.

It is amazing where Sir Thomas Lofty stores all his knowledge.

D A C T Y L.

It is wonderful how the mind of man can contain it.

Sir T H O M A S.

Why, to tell you the truth, that circumstance has a good deal engag'd my attention ; and I believe you will admit my method of solving the phenomenon philosophical and ingenious enough.

P U F F.

Without question.

A L L.

ALL.

Doubtless.

Sir THOMAS.

I suppose, Gentlemen, my memory, or mind, to be a chest of drawers, a kind of bureau; where, in separate cellules, my different knowlege on different subjects is stor'd.

RUST.

A prodigious discovery!

ALL.

Amazing!

Sir THOMAS.

To this cabinet, volition, or will, has a key; so when an arduous subject occurs, I unlock my bureau, pull out the particular drawer, and am supplied with what I want in an instant.

DACTYL.

A Malbranch!

PUFF.

A Boyle!

ALL.

A Locke!

Enter SERVANT.

SERVANT.

Mr. Bever.

[*Exit.*

Sir THOMAS.

A young Gentleman from Oxford, recommended to my care by his father. The
university

university has given him a good solid Doric foundation ; and when he has receiv'd from you a few Tuscan touches, the Ionic and Corinthian graces, I make no doubt but he will prove a composite pillar to the republic of letters. [*Enter BEVER.*] This, Sir, is the school from whence so many capital masters have issued ; the river that enriches the regions of science.

D A C T Y L.

Of which river, Sir Thomas, you are the source ; here we quaff : *Et purpureo bibimus ore nectar.*

SIR T H O M A S.

Purpureo! Delicate, indeed ! Mr. Dactyl. Do you hear, Mr. Bever ? *Bibimus ore nectar.* You, young Gentleman, must be instructed to quote ; nothing gives a period more spirit than a happy Latin quotation, nor has indeed a finer effect at the head of an essay. Poor Dick Steel ! I have oblig'd him with many a motto for his fugitive pieces.

P U F F.

Aye, and with the contents too, or Sir Richard is foully bely'd.

Enter S E R V A N T.

S E R V A N T.

Sir Roger Dowlas.

D

Sir

Sir THOMAS.

Pray desire him to enter. [*Exit* Servant.] Sir Roger, Gentlemen, is a considerable East-India proprietor; and seems desirous of collecting, from this learned assembly, some rhetorical flowers, which he hopes to strew, with honour to himself, and advantage to the Company, at Merchant-Taylors-Hall. [*Enter* Sir ROGER DOWLAS.] Sir Roger, be seated. This Gentleman has, in common with the greatest orator the world ever saw, a small natural infirmity; he stutters a little: But I have prescrib'd the same remedy that Demosthenes used, and don't despair of a radical cure. Well, Sir, have you digested those general rules?

Sir ROGER.

Pr--ett--y well, I am obli--g'd to you, Sir Thomas.

Sir THOMAS.

Have you been regular in taking your tincture of sage, to give you confidence for speaking in public?

Sir ROGER.

Y--es, Sir Thomas.

Sir THOMAS.

Did you open at the last General Court?

Sir ROGER.

I attem--p--ted fo--ur or fi--ve times.

Sir

Sir THOMAS.

What hinder'd your progress?

Sir ROGER.

The pe--b--bles.

Sir THOMAS.

Oh, the pebbles in his mouth. But they are only put in to practise in private; you should take them out when you are addressing the public.

Sir ROGER.

Yes; I will, for the fu--ture.

Sir THOMAS.

Well, Mr. Rust, you had a *tête-à-tête* with my niece. A-propos, Mr. Bever, here offers a fine occasion for you; we shall take the liberty to trouble your Muse on their nuptials: O Love! O Hymen! here prune thy purple wings; trim thy bright torch. Hey, Mr. Bever?

BEVER.

My talents are at Sir Thomas Lofty's direction; tho' I must despair of producing any performance worthy the attention of so compleat a judge of the elegant arts.

Sir THOMAS.

Too modest, good Mr. Bever. Well, Mr. Rust, any new acquisition, since our last meeting, to your matchless collection?

R U S T.

Why, Sir Thomas, I have both lost and gain'd since I saw you.

Sir T H O M A S.

Lost! I am sorry for that.

R U S T.

The curious sarcophagus, that was sent me from Naples, by Signor Belloni ---

Sir T H O M A S.

You mean the urn that was supposed to contain the dust of Agrippa!

R U S T.

Supposed! no doubt but it did!

Sir T H O M A S.

I hope no sinister accident to that inestimable relic of Rome.

R U S T.

It's gone.

Sir T H O M A S.

Gone! oh, illiberal! What, stolen, I suppose, by some Connoisseur?

R U S T.

Worse, worse! a prey, a martyr to ignorance: A housemaid that I hir'd last week, mistook it for a broken green chamber-pot, and sent it away in the dust-cart.

Sir T H O M A S.

She merits impaling. Oh, the Hun!

D A C-

DACTYL.

The Vandal !

ALL.

The Visigoth !

RUST.

But I have this day acquir'd a treasure that
will in some measure make me amends.

Sir THOMAS.

Indeed ! what can that be ?

PUFF.

That must be something curious, indeed.

RUST.

It has cost me infinite trouble to get it.

DACTYL.

Great rarities are not had without pains.

RUST.

It is three months ago since I got the first
scent of it, and I have been ever since on the
hunt ; but all to no purpose.

Sir THOMAS.

I am quite upon thorns till I see it.

RUST.

And yesterday, when I had given it over,
when all my hopes were grown desperate, it
fell into my hands, by the most unexpected
and wonderful accident.

Sir THOMAS.

Quod optanti divum promittere nemo
Auderet, volvenda dies en attulit ultro.

Mr. Bever, you remark my quotation ?

D 3

BEVER.

BEVER.

Most happy. Oh, Sir, nothing you say can be lost.

RUST.

I have brought it here in my pocket; I am no churl; I love to pleasure my friends.

Sir THOMAS.

You are, Mr. Rust, extremely obliging.

ALL.

Very kind, very obliging, indeed.

RUST.

It was not much hurt by the fire.

Sir THOMAS.

Very fortunate.

RUST.

The edges are foil'd by the link; but many of the letters are exceedingly legible.

Sir ROGER.

A li--ttle roo--m, if you p--lease.

RUST.

Here it is; the precious remains of the very North-Briton that was burnt at the Royal-Exchange.

Sir THOMAS.

Number Forty-five?

RUST.

The same.

BEVER.

You are a lucky man, Mr. Rust.

RUST.

RUST.

I think so. But, Gentlemen, I hope I need not give you a caution: Hush—silence—no words on this matter.

DACTYL.

You may depend upon us.

RUST.

For as the paper has not suffer'd the law, I don't know whether they may not seize it again.

Sir THOMAS.

With us you are safe, Mr. Rust. Well, young Gentleman, you see we cultivate all branches of science.

BEVER.

Amazing, indeed! But when we consider you, Sir Thomas, as the directing, the ruling planet, our wonder subsides in an instant. Science first saw the day with Socrates in the Attic portico; her early years were spent with Tully, in the Tusculan shade; but her ripe, maturer hours, she enjoys with Sir Thomas Lofty, near Cavendish-square,

Sir THOMAS.

The most classical compliment I ever receiv'd. Gentlemen, a philosophical repast attends your acceptance within. Sir Roger, you'll lead the way. [*Exeunt all but Sir Thomas and Bever.*] Mr. Bever, may I beg your ear for a moment? Mr. Bever, the

D 4 friend-

friendship I have for your father, secured you, at first, a gracious reception from me; but what I then paid to an old obligation, is now, Sir, due to your own particular merit.

BEVER.

I am happy, Sir Thomas, if—

Sir THOMAS.

Your patience. There is in you, Mr. Bever, a fire of imagination, a quickness of apprehension, a solidity of judgment, join'd to a depth of discretion, that I never yet met with in any subject at your time of life.

BEVER.

I hope I shall never forfeit—

Sir THOMAS.

I am sure you never will; and to give you a convincing proof that I think so, I am now going to trust you with the most important secret of my whole life.

BEVER.

Your confidence does me great honour.

Sir THOMAS.

But this must be on a certain condition.

BEVER.

Name it.

Sir THOMAS.

That you give me your solemn promise to comply with one request I shall make you.

BEVER.

There is nothing Sir Thomas Lofty can ask, that I shall not chearfully grant.

Sir

Sir THOMAS.

Nay, in fact, it will be serving yourself.

BEVER.

I want no such inducement.

Sir THOMAS.

Enough. But we can't be too private.
[*Shuts the door.*] Sit you down. Your Christian name, I think is—

BEVER.

Richard.

Sir THOMAS.

True; the same as your father's: Come, let us be familiar. It is, I think, dear Dick, acknowleg'd, that the English have reach'd the highest pitch of perfection in every department of writing but one—the dramatic.

BEVER.

Why, the French critics are a little severe.

Sir THOMAS.

And with reason. Now, to rescue our credit, and at the same time give my country a model, [*shews a manuscript,*] see here.

BEVER.

A play?

Sir THOMAS.

A *chef d'œuvre*.

BEVER.

Your own?

Sir THOMAS.

Speak lower. I am the author.

BEVER.

BEVER.

Nay, then there can be no doubt of its merit.

Sir THOMAS.

I think not. You will be charm'd with the subject.

BEVER.

What is it, Sir Thomas?

Sir THOMAS.

I shall surprize you. The story of Robinson Crusoe. Are not you struck?

BEVER.

Most prodigiously.

Sir THOMAS.

Yes; I knew the very title would hit you. You will find the whole fable is finely conducted, and the character of Friday, *qualis ab incepto*, nobly supported throughout.

BEVER.

A pretty difficult task.

Sir THOMAS.

True; that was not a bow for a boy. The piece has long been in rehearsal at Drury-lane playhouse, and this night is to make its appearance.

BEVER.

To-night?

Sir THOMAS.

This night.

BEVER.

I will attend, and engage all my friends to support it.

Sir

Sir THOMAS.

That is not my purpose; the piece will want no such assistance.

BEVER.

I beg pardon.

Sir THOMAS.

The manager of that house (who, you know, is a writer himself) finding all the anonymous things he produc'd (indeed some of them wretched enough, and very unworthy of him), plac'd to his account by the public, is determin'd to exhibit no more without knowing the name of the author.

BEVER.

A reasonable caution.

Sir THOMAS.

Now, upon my promise (for I appear to patronize the play) to announce the author before the curtain draws up, Robinson Crusoe is advertis'd for this evening.

BEVER.

Oh, then you will acknowlege the piece to be yours?

Sir THOMAS.

No,

BEVER.

How then?

Sir THOMAS.

My design is to give it to you.

BEVER.

To me!

Sir

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Sir THOMAS.

To you.

BEVER.

What, me the author of Robinson Crusoe!

Sir THOMAS.

Aye.

BEVER.

Lord, Sir Thomas, it will never gain credit: So compleat a production the work of a stripling! Besides, Sir, as the merit is yours, why rob yourself of the glory?

Sir THOMAS.

I am entirely indifferent to that.

BEVER.

Then why take the trouble?

Sir THOMAS.

My fondness for letters, and love of my country. Besides, dear Dick, though the *pauci* & *selecti*, the chosen few, know the full value of a performance like this, yet the ignorant, the profane (by much the majority) will be apt to think it an occupation ill suited to my time of life.

BEVER.

Their censure is praise.

Sir THOMAS.

Doubtless. But indeed my principal motive is my friendship for you. You are now a candidate for literary honours, and I am de-

determin'd to fix your fame on an immoveable basis.

BEVER.

You are most excessively kind ; but there is something so disingenuous in stealing reputation from another man.

Sir THOMAS.

Idle punctilio !

BEVER.

It puts me so in mind of the daw in the fable.

Sir THOMAS.

Come, come, dear Dick, I won't suffer your modesty to murder your fame. But the company will suspect something ; we will join them, and proclaim you the author. There, keep the copy ; to you I consign it for ever ; it shall be a secret to latest posterity. You will be smother'd with praise by our friends ; they shall all in their bark to the playhouse ; and there,

Attendant fail,
Pursue the triumph, and partake the gale.

[*Exeunt.*]

END of the SECOND ACT.

ACT



A C T III. *Scene continues.*

Enter BEVER, reading.

SO ends the first Act. Come, now for the second. "Act the second, shewing," — the coxcomb has prefac'd every act with an argument too, in humble imitation, I warrant, of Monsi. Diderot — "Shewing the fatal effects of disobedience to parents;" with, I suppose, the diverting scene of a gibbet; an entertaining subject for comedy. And the blockhead is as prolix; every scene as long as a homily. Let's see; how does this end? "Exit Crusoe, and enter some savages, dancing a faraband." There's no bearing this abominable trash. [*Enter JULIET.*] So, Madam; thanks to your advice and direction, I am got into a fine situation.

JULIET.

What is the matter now, Mr. Bever?

BEVER.

The Robinson Crusoe.

JULIET.

Oh, the play that is to be acted to-night. How secret you were? Who in the world would have guess'd you was the author?

BEVER.

BEVER.

Me, Madam!

JULIET.

Your title is odd; but to a genius every subject is good.

BEVER.

You are inclin'd to be pleasant.

JULIET.

Within they have been all prodigious loud in the praise of your piece; but I think my uncle rather more eager than any.

BEVER.

He has reason; for fatherly fondness goes far.

JULIET.

I don't understand you.

BEVER.

You don't!

JULIET.

No.

BEVER.

Nay, Juliet, this is too much; you know it is none of my play.

JULIET.

Whose then?

BEVER.

Your uncle's.

JULIET.

My uncle's! Then how, in the name of wonder, came you to adopt it?

BEVER.

At his earnest request. I may be a fool; but remember, Madam, you are the cause.

J U-

58 T H E P A T R O N .

J U L I E T .

This is strange; but I can't conceive what his motive could be.

B E V E R .

His motive is obvious enough; to screen himself from the infamy of being the Author.

J U L I E T .

What, is it bad, then?

B E V E R .

Bad! most infernal!

J U L I E T .

And you have consented to own it?

B E V E R .

Why, what could I do? He in a manner compell'd me

J U L I E T .

I am extremely glad of it.

B E V E R .

Glad of it! Why I tell you 'tis the most dull, tedious, melancholy —

J U L I E T .

So much the better.

B E V E R .

The most flat piece of frippery that ever Grubstreet produc'd.

J U L I E T .

So much the better.

B E V E R .

It will be damn'd before the third act.

J U L I E T .

So much the better.

B E V E R .

BEVER.

And I shall be hooted and pointed at wherever I go.

JULIET.

So much the better.

BEVER.

So much the better! Zounds! so, I suppose, you would say if I was going to be hang'd. Do you call this a mark of your friendship?

JULIET.

Ah, Bever, Bever! you are a miserable politician: Do you know now that this is the luckiest incident that ever occurred?

BEVER.

Indeed!

JULIET.

It could not have been better laid, had we plann'd it ourselves.

BEVER.

You will pardon my want of conception; but these are riddles—

JULIET.

That at present I have not time to explain. But what makes you loit'ring here? Past six o'clock, as I live! Why, your play is begun; run, run to the house. Was ever Author so little anxious for the fate of his piece.

BEVER.

My piece!

JULIET.

Sir Thomas! I know by his walk. Fly; and pray all the way for the fall of your play. And,

E

do

60 T H E P A T R O N .

do you hear, if you find the audience too indulgent, inclin'd to be milky, rather than fail, squeeze in a little acid yourself. Oh, Mr. Bever, at your return let me see you, before you go to my uncle ; that is, if you have the good luck to be damn'd.

B E V E R .

You need not doubt that.

[*Exit.*

Enter Sir T H O M A S L O F T Y .

Sir T H O M A S .

So, Juliet ; was not that Mr. Bever ?

J U L I E T .

Yes, Sir.

Sir T H O M A S .

He is rather tardy ; by this time his cause is come on. And how is the young Gentleman affected ? for this is a trying occasion.

J U L I E T .

He seems pretty certain, Sir.

Sir T H O M A S .

Indeed, I think he has very little reason for fear. I confess I admire the piece ; and feel as much for its fate as if the work was my own.

J U L I E T .

That I most sincerely believe. I wonder, Sir, you did not choose to be present.

Sir T H O M A S .

Better not. My affections are strong, Juliet, and my nerves but tenderly strung ; however, intelligent people are planted, who will bring me, every Act, a faithful account of the process.

J U -

JULIET.

That will answer your purpose as well.

Sir THOMAS.

Indeed, I am passionately fond of the arts, and therefore can't help — Did not somebody knock? No. My good girl, will you step, and take care that when any body comes, the servants may not be out of the way. [*Exit JULIET.*] Five and thirty minutes past six; by this time the first act must be over: John will be presently here. I think it can't fail; yet there is so much whim and caprice in the public opinion, that—This young man is unknown; they'll give him no credit. I had better have own'd it myself: Reputation goes a great way in these matters; people are afraid to find fault; they are cautious in censuring the works of a man who—hush! that's he: no; 'tis only the shutters. After all, I think I have chose the best way; for if it succeeds to the degree I expect, it will be easy to circulate the real name of the author; if it falls, I am conceal'd; my fame suffers—no—There he is. [*Loud knocking.*] I can't conceive what kept him so long. [*Enter JOHN.*] So John; well, and—but you have been a monstrous while.

JOHN.

Sir, I was wedg'd so close in the pit, that I could scarcely get out.

Sir THOMAS.

The house was full, then?

E 2

JOHN

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JOHN.

As an egg, Sir.

Sir THOMAS.

That's right. Well, John, and did matters go swimmingly? hey?

JOHN.

Exceedingly well, Sir,

Sir THOMAS.

Exceedingly well. I don't doubt it. What, vast clapping and roars of applause, I suppose.

JOHN.

Very well, Sir.

Sir THOMAS.

Very well, Sir! You are damn'd costive, I think. But did not the pit and boxes thunder again?

JOHN.

I can't say there was over much thunder.

Sir THOMAS.

No! Oh, attentive, I reckon. Aye, attention; that is the true, solid, substantial applause. All else may be purchas'd; hands move as they are bid: But when the audience is hush'd, still, afraid of losing a word, then—

JOHN.

Yes, they were very quiet, indeed, Sir.

Sir THOMAS.

I like them the better, John; a strong mark of their great sensibility. Did you see Robin?

JOHN.

Yes, Sir; he'll be here in a trice; I left him list'ning at the back of the boxes, and charg'd him to make all the haste home that he could.

Sir

Sir THOMAS.

That's right, John; very well; your account pleases me much, honest John. [*Exit JOHN.*] No, I did not expect the first act would produce any prodigious effect. And, after all, the first act is but a mere introduction; just opens the business, the plot, and gives a little insight into the characters; so that if you but engage and interest the house, it is as much as the best writer can flatt—[*Knocking without.*] Gadso! what, Robin already! why the fellow has the feet of a Mercury. [*Enter ROBIN.*] Well, Robin, and what news do you bring?

ROBIN.

Sir, I, I, I—

Sir THOMAS.

Stop, Robin, and recover your breath. Now, Robin.

ROBIN.

There has been a woundy uproar below.

Sir THOMAS.

An uproar! what, at the playhouse?

ROBIN.

Aye.

Sir THOMAS.

At what?

ROBIN.

I don't know: Belike at the words the play-folk were talking.

Sir THOMAS.

At the players! how can that be? Oh, now I begin to conceive. Poor fellow, he knows but

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little of plays: What, Robin, I suppose, hallooing, and clapping, and knocking of sticks.

ROBIN.

Hallooing! aye, and hooting too.

Sir THOMAS.

And hooting!

ROBIN.

Aye, and hissing to boot.

Sir THOMAS.

Hissing! you must be mistaken.

ROBIN.

By the mass, but I am not.

Sir THOMAS.

Impossible! Oh, most likely some drunken disorderly fellows, that were disturbing the house, and interrupting the play; too common a case; the people were right: they deserv'd a rebuke. Did not you hear them cry, Out, out, out!

ROBIN.

Noa; that was not the cry; 'twas, Off, off, off!

Sir THOMAS.

That was a whimsical noise. Zounds! that must be the players. Did you observe nothing else?

ROBIN.

Belike the quarrel first began between the gentry and a black-a-moor man.

Sir THOMAS.

With Friday! The public taste is debauch'd; honest nature is too plain and simple for their vitiated palates! [*Enter JULIET.*] Juliet, Robin

bin brings me the strangest account; some little disturbance; but I suppose it was soon settled again. Oh, but here comes Mr. Staytape, my taylor; he is a rational being; we shall be able to make something of him. [*Enter STAYTAPE.*] So, Staytape; what, is the third act over already?

S T A Y T A P E.

Over, Sir! no; nor never will be.

S i r T H O M A S.

What do you mean?

S T A Y T A P E.

Cut short.

S i r T H O M A S.

I don't comprehend you.

S T A Y T A P E.

Why, Sir, the poet has made a mistake in measuring the taste of the town: the goods, it seems, did not fit; so they return'd them upon the gentleman's hands.

S i r T H O M A S.

Rot your affectation and quaintness, you puppy! speak plain.

S T A Y T A P E.

Why then, Sir, Robinson Crusoe is dead.

S i r T H O M A S.

Dead!

S T A Y T A P E.

Aye; and what is worse, will never rise any more. You will soon have all the particulars; for there were four or five of your friends close at my heels.

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Sir THOMAS.

Staytape, Juliet, run and stop them; say I am gone out; I am sick; I am engag'd: But whatever you do, be sure you don't let Bever come in. Secure of the victory, I invited them to the celebr—

STAYTAPE.

Sir, they are here.

Sir THOMAS.

Confound —

Enter PUFF, DACTYL, and RUST.

RUST.

Aye, truly, Mr. Puff, this is but a bitter beginning; then the young man must turn himself to some other trade.

PUFF.

Servant, Sir Thomas; I suppose you have heard the news of —

Sir THOMAS.

Yes, yes; I have been told it before.

DACTYL.

I confess I did not suspect it; but there is no knowing what effect these things will have, till they come on the stage.

RUST.

For my part, I don't know much of these matters; but a couple of gentlemen near me, who seem'd sagacious enough too, declar'd, that it was the vilest stuff they ever had heard, and wonder'd the players would act it.

D A C-

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DACTYL.

Yes; I don't remember to have seen a more general dislike.

PUFF.

I was thinking to ask you, Sir Thomas, for your interest with Mr. Bever, about buying the copy; but now no mortal would read it. Lord, Sir, it would not pay for paper and printing.

RUST.

I remember Kennet, in his Roman Antiquities, mentions a Play of Terence's, Mr. Dactyl, that was terribly treated; but that he attributes to the peoples' fondness for certain funambuli, or rope-dancers; but I have not lately heard of any famous tumblers in town; Sir Thomas, have you?

Sir THOMAS.

How should I? do you suppose I trouble my head about tumblers?

RUST.

Nay, I did not—

BEVER, *speaking without.*

Not to be spoke with! Don't tell me, Sir; he must, he shall.

Sir THOMAS.

Mr. Bever's voice. If he is admitted in his present disposition, the whole secret will certainly out. Gentlemen, some affairs of a most interesting nature makes it impossible for me to have the honour of your company to-night; therefore I beg you would be so good as to---

RUST.

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R U S T.

Affairs! no bad news? I hope Miss Julè is well.

Sir T H O M A S.

Very well; but I am most exceedingly ---

R U S T.

I shall only just stay to see Mr. Bever: Poor lad! he will be most horribly down in the mouth; a little comfort won't come amiss.

Sir T H O M A S.

Mr. Bever, Sir! you won't see him here.

R U S T.

Not here! why I thought I heard his voice but just now.

Sir T H O M A S.

You are mistaken, Mr. Rust; but ---

R U S T.

May be so; then we will go. Sir Thomas, my compliments of condolance, if you please, to the Poet.

Sir T H O M A S.

Aye, aye.

D A C T Y L.

And mine; for I suppose we sha'n't see him soon.

P U F F.

Poor Gentleman! I warrant he won't shew his head for these six months.

R U S T.

Aye, aye; indeed I am very sorry for him; so tell him, Sir.

D A C T Y L and P U F F.

So are we.

R U S T.

RUST.

Sir Thomas, your servant. Come, Gentlemen. By all this confusion in Sir Thomas, there must be something more in the wind than I know ; but I will watch, I am resolv'd.

[*Exeunt.*

B E V E R, *without.*

Rascals, stand by ! I must, I will see him.

Enter B E V E R.

So, Sir ; this is delicate treatment, after all I have suffer'd.

Sir T H O M A S.

Mr. Bever, I hope you don't --- that is ---

B E V E R.

Well, Sir Thomas Lofty, what think you now of your Robinson Crusoe ? a pretty performance !

Sir T H O M A S.

Think, Mr. Bever ! I think the public are blockheads ; a tasteless, stupid, ignorant tribe ; and a man of genius deserves to be damn'd who writes any thing for them. But courage, dear Dick ! the principals will give you what the people refuse ; the closet will do you that justice the stage has deny'd : Print your Play.

B E V E R.

My Play ! zounds, Sir, 'tis your own.

Sir T H O M A S.

Speak lower, dear Dick ; be moderate, my good, dear lad !

B E V E R.

Oh, Sir Thomas, you may be easy enough ;
you

you are safe and secure, remov'd far from that precipice that has dash'd me to-pieces.

Sir THOMAS.

Dear Dick, don't believe it will hurt you : The Critics, the real judges, will discover in that piece such excellent talents ---

BEVER.

No, Sir Thomas, no. I shall neither flatter you, nor myself; I have acquir'd a right to speak what I think. Your Play, Sir, is a wretched performance; and in this opinion all mankind are united.

Sir THOMAS.

May be not.

BEVER.

If your piece had been greatly receiv'd, I would have declared Sir Thomas Lofty the author; if coldly, I would have own'd it myself; but such disgraceful, such contemptible treatment!—I own the burthen is too heavy for me; so, Sir, you must bear it yourself.

Sir THOMAS.

Me, dear Dick! what, to become ridiculous in the decline of my life; to destroy, in one hour, the fame that forty years has been building! that was the prop, the support of my age! Can you be cruel enough to desire it?

BEVER.

Zounds! Sir, and why must I be your crutch? Would you have me become a voluntary victim? No, Sir, this cause does not merit a martyrdom.

Sir

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Sir THOMAS.

I own myself greatly oblig'd ; but persevere, dear Dick, persevere ; you have time to recover your fame ; I beg it with tears in my eyes. Another Play will —

BEVER.

No, Sir Thomas ; I have done with the stage ; the Muses and I meet no more.

Sir THOMAS.

Nay, there are various roads open in life.

BEVER.

Not one, where your piece won't pursue me : If I go to the Bar, the ghost of this curs'd comedy will follow, and hunt me in Westminster-hall. Nay, when I die, it will stick to my Memory, and I shall be handed down to posterity with the author of *Love in a Hollow Tree*.

Sir THOMAS.

Then marry : You are a pretty smart figure ; and your poetical talents ---

BEVER.

And what Fair would admit of my suit, or family wish to receive me ? Make the case your own, Sir Thomas ; would you ?

Sir THOMAS.

With infinite pleasure.

BEVER.

Then give me your niece ; her hand shall seal up my lips.

Sir THOMAS.

What, Juliet ? Willingly. But are you serious ? Do you really admire the Girl ?

BEVER.

BEVER.

Beyond what words can exprefs. It was by her advice I consented to father your Play.

Sir THOMAS.

What, is Juliet appriz'd? Here, Robin, John, run and call my niece hither this moment. That giddy baggage will blab all in an instant.

BEVER.

You are mistaken; she is wiser than you are aware of.

Enter JULIET.

Sir THOMAS.

Oh, Juliet! you know what has happen'd?

JULIET.

I do, Sir.

Sir THOMAS.

Have you reveal'd this unfortunate secret?

JULIET.

To no mortal, Sir Thomas.

Sir THOMAS.

Come, give me your hand. Mr. Bever, child, for my sake, has renounced the Stage, and the whole Republic of Letters; in return, I owe him your hand.

JULIET.

My hand! what, to a Poet hooted, hissed, and exploded! You must pardon me, Sir.

Sir THOMAS.

Juliet, a trifle; the most they can say of him is, that he is a little wanting in wit; and he has so many brother-writers to keep him in coun-

countenance, that now-a-days that is no reflection at all.

J U L I E T.

Then, Sir, your engagement to Mr. Rust.

Sir T H O M A S.

I have found out the rascal; he has been more impertinently severe on my play, than all the rest put together; so that I am determined he shall be none of the man.

Enter R U S T.

R U S T.

Are you so, Sir? what, then, I am to be sacrific'd, in order to preserve the secret that you are a blockhead: But you are out in your politics; before night it shall be known in all the Coffee-houses in town.

Sir T H O M A S.

For Heaven's sake, Mr. Rust!

R U S T.

And to-morrow I will paragraph you in every news-paper; you shall no longer impose on the world; I will unmask you; the lion's skin shall hide you no longer.

Sir T H O M A S.

Juliet! Mr. Bever! what can I do?

B E V E R.

Sir Thomas, let me manage this matter. Harkee, old Gentleman, a word in your ear; you remember what you have in your pocket?

R U S T.

Hey! how! what?

B E V E R.

BEVER.

The curiosity that has cost you so much pains.

RUST.

What, my Æneas ! my precious relict of Troy !

BEVER.

You must give up that, or the Lady.

JULIET.

How, Mr. Bever ?

BEVER.

Never fear ; I am sure of my man.

RUST.

Let me consider : As to the girl, girls are plenty enough ; I can marry whenever I will : But my paper, my phoenix, that springs fresh from the flames, that can never be match'd.—Take her.

BEVER.

And, as you love your own secret, be careful of ours. 4 AP 54

RUST.

I am dumb.

Sir THOMAS.

Now, Juliet.

JULIET.

You join me, Sir, to an unfortunate Bard ; but, to procure your peace —

Sir THOMAS.

You oblige me for ever. Now the secret dies with us four. My fault. I owe him much.

Be it your care to shew it ;

And bless the Man, tho' I have damn'd the Poet.

F I N I S.

